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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION REPORT - Climate Change - Montreal Conference Euro-Mediterranean Conference in Barcelona President Bush's Policies

PARIS - Tuesday, November 29, 2005

(A) SUBJECTS COVERED IN TODAY'S REPORT:

Climate Change - Montreal Conference
Euro-Mediterranean Conference in Barcelona
President Bush's Policies

B) SUMMARY OF COVERAGE:

Several stories are featured on today's front pages: domestic immigration issues as the government looks into solutions after the recent suburban violence, and the climate change conference in Montreal, with Le Monde headlining "The World on Alert Over Global Warming" and La Tribune which headlines: "In Montreal, the World Stuck on Climate." (See Part C)

President Chirac's 73rd birthday is also widely featured, with commentaries ranging from his thirty years of leadership as Prime Minister, Minister and President, "a French exception" according to Liberation, to a critical editorial by Jean-Marie Colombani in Le Monde: "The Difficult end of the Reign of Jacques Chirac." Colombani writes: "Of course there is a sort of unhealthy joy in the European and especially in the American media at the French misfortunes. When the New York Times headlines 'Paris is Burning' is it not only exaggerated it is factually untrue but barely more so than when the French media announce the umpteenth 'fall' of America after hurricane Katrina. Jacques Chirac appears to be as weakened by the events in the suburbs as George Bush was by hurricane Katrina."

The postponement of Saddam's trial is widely and factually reported, while President Bush and his attempts to "change the subject" as he turns from Iraq to "illegal immigration" is a major story in Le Figaro (See Part C).

The conclusion of the Euro-Mediterranean conference in Barcelona elicits wide coverage and several editorials including in the regional press. (See Part C)

Le Monde, which originally reported on allegations of a "Guantanamo-style prison" in Kosovo quotes former KFOR commander General Valentin, previously quoted in Le Figaro: "Unless I was deaf and blind this detention center has only held people arrested by KFOR under UN resolution 1244. All American prisoners wear orange jumpsuits. When it comes to being able to tell the difference between a bearded Albanian and a Taliban I believe that Mr. Robles made an assimilation between the two." A small item in Liberation entitled: "The EU Asks Washington for Answers" states: "The European Justice Commissioner, Franco Frattini, revealed yesterday that he has asked the U.S. for explanations about the alleged existence of secret CIA prisons in Europe, but that he has received no

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answer to date."

Catholic La Croix devotes a report to biometrics and how this technology is invading our daily lives. The article reports: "since last month, the U.S. requires visa waiver country citizens to carry a biometric passport to enter the U.S. without a visa." The article also notes that the biometric system required by the U.S. "is among the most sophisticated." In a separate sidebar, La Croix reports on the latest figures for foreign students going to the U.S., published by the International Institute for Education, titled "The American Dream Losing Steam." The article notes that high education costs but also the difficulty of getting visas have impacted on the figures.

Le Parisien interviews Jean-Louis Bourlanges, a European Representative, on France's influence in Europe: "Since the 'no' vote to the EU Constitution, France has indeed lost some of its influence: it is no longer a reference. No one listens to us anymore. The British idea of Europe as a free trade zone is replacing the French idea of a political entity with strong

institutions. and which on the international level stands separate from the U.S. France and its vision lost much with the nomination of Barosso who perfectly embodies the British vision: he is liberal, pro-Atlantic and has a timid idea of Europe's construction."

(C) SUPPORTING TEXT/BLOCK QUOTES:

Climate Change - Montreal Conference

"Hot Potatoes"

Pascal Aubert in centrist La Tribune (11/29): "Constrain or convince? That is the question facing the international community, which remains divided in the face of global warming. Once again in Montreal, the international community will be hard pressed to stand united against a plague that does not differentiate between North and South. Everyone agrees that climate change is a danger for the eco-system and that human activity is a multiplying factor - the U.S. rallied to this idea a few months ago. On all other issues, and especially on how to deal with the changes, everyone disagrees. A few months after the Kyoto Protocol went into effect, the limitations of voluntary emission reduction have become apparent. Everyone knows that to reach the goals set, the price to pay will be a slower economy and limiting industrial production: two things that public opinions are not ready to accept. It is illusory to believe that technological progress is enough to curb the trend, as the U.S. believes. The challenge is not only to governments, it is also to every individual."

"Climate Change and World Changes"

Bernard Le Solleu in regional Ouest-France (11/29): "Not only the U.S. but also China and India are staying out of the fight against global warming. The case of China, with its record growth and many incidents affecting pollution, makes it easier for the Bush administration, which can say: what is the good of Kyoto, if emerging nations, which are huge polluters, do not join in? Russia is also a source of concern: Putin seems more interested in selling his oil and gas at low cost. Lastly, the plan to reduce emissions to the 1990 levels is unrealistic. But all is not lost: the Bush administration will not last forever and France is planning to build a new nuclear reactor in Cherbourg. The climate is changing and the world is moving. But is it moving in the right direction? The answer in the next century."

"Negotiations on Post-Kyoto"

Laurent D'Ersu in Catholic La Croix (11/29): "Europeans and Canadians consider it essential to reach a new agreement by 2010. But they are facing opposition from the U.S., which has rejected Kyoto and has also indicated that it will reject all discussions in Montreal on future climate negotiations. Because of the risk of a U.S. veto, the EU is only targeting a 'discussion process.'"

President Bush's Policies

"Bush Takes On Illegal Immigration"

Philippe Gelie in right-of-center Le Figaro (11/29): "President Bush needs to change the subject. The war in Iraq, the manipulation that preceded it, his falling popularity ratings and the rebuff he has been meeting with abroad are all banding together to weaken the U.S. President, who is beginning to be labeled 'a lame duck' three years before the end of his term. The President has therefore decided to open a new front: that of illegal immigration. But after the many initiatives which have turned against him, one wonders whether this latest one is indeed a wise choice."

Euro-Mediterranean Conference in Barcelona

"Arabs and Europeans Divided on Terrorism"

Francois Musseau in left-of-center Liberation (11/29): "An atmosphere of fiasco permeated the Euro-Mediterranean summit in Barcelona. Until the last minute, the members of this ten year-old group had to haggle over the terms to be used in the 'anti-terrorist code of conduct.' The text, which states that 'terrorism can never be justified,' had to be diluted after the ritual fight between Europeans and Arabs on the debated question of legitimacy (or not) of armed resistance to an occupier. The divergence between Israel and Arab countries kept the 35 nations from co-signing the slightest declaration on the prospect for peace in the Middle East. A commitment for liberalization of agricultural products and services between the two zones was made, and the prospect for a free trade zone by 2010 was emphasized. But a diplomat indicated this was not 'a reasonable time frame.'" STAPLETON